

HOW TO OVERCOME YOUR DIFFICULTIES

By Ven. Dr. K. Sri Dhammananda

Are you worried? Are you miserable? This write-up is dedicated to those who worry themselves unduly.

Worries and miseries are twin evils that go hand in hand. They co-exist in this world. If you feel worried, you are miserable! If you are miserable, you are worried. We must face facts. Although we cannot run away from them, we must not let these twin evils of worry and misery overcome us. We must overcome them. We can do so by our own human efforts, correctly directed with determination and patience. With proper understanding and carefully applied intelligence, we should be able to subdue our emotional feelings and do away with worries and miseries.

Our worries are of our own making. We create them in our own minds, through our inability or failure

to understand the danger of our egoistic feelings and the inflated and false values we attach to things. If only we could see things in their perspective, in that nothing is permanent in this world and that our own egoistic self is our wild imagination running riot in our untrained mind, we should be going a long way to finding the remedy to eradicate our worries and miseries. We must cultivate our minds and hearts to forget about self and to be of service and use to humanity. This is one of the means whereby we can find real peace and happiness.

Many people have longings and hankerings, fears and anxieties which they have not learnt to sublimate and are ashamed to admit them even to themselves. But these unwholesome emotions have force. No matter how we may try to bottle them up they seek a release by affecting the physical machinery resulting in chronic illness. All these can be repelled by correct methods of meditation or mental culture, because the untrained mind is the main cause of such worries.

Whenever you have worries in your mind, do not show your sulky face to each and every person you come across. You should reveal your worries only to those who really can help you. How nice it would be if you could maintain your smiling face in spite of all the difficulties confronting you. This is not very difficult if only you really try. Many teenagers worry too much when they are jilted by a friend of the opposite sex. They may even plan to commit suicide, compelled by the plight of frustration and disappointment. Some even end up in lunatic

asylums. Many such broken-hearted youths lead miserable lives. All these unfortunate events happen due to a lack of understanding of the real nature of life. Somehow or other, departure or separation is unavoidable. This may happen sometimes at the beginning of a life career; sometimes in the middle and sometimes at the end; it is certainly unavoidable. When such things happen one must try to find out where the cause lies. However, if the separation is beyond control one must have the courage to bear it by realizing the nature of life. But on the other hand, it is not difficult for anyone to find new friends, to fill the vacuum if one really wants to.

“Wheresoever fear arises, it arises in the fool, not in the wise man”, says the Buddha. Fears are nothing more than states of mind. One’s state of mind is subject to control and direction; the negative use of thought produces our fears; the positive use realizes our hopes and ideals, and in these cases the choice rests entirely with ourselves. Every human being has the ability to completely control his own mind. Nature has endowed man with absolute control over but one thing, and that is thought. This fact, coupled with the additional fact that everything which man creates begins in the form of a thought, leads one very near to the principle by which fear may be mastered.

A noted British anatomist was once asked by a student what was the best cure for fear, and he answered, *“Try doing something for someone”*.

The student was considerably astonished by the

reply, and requested further enlightenment whereupon his instructor said, “*You can’t have two opposing sets of thoughts in your mind at one and the same time*”. One set of thoughts will always drive the other out. If, for instance, your mind is completely occupied with an unselfish desire to help someone else, you can’t be harbouring fear at the same time.

“*Worry dries up the blood sooner than age.*” Fears, worries and anxieties in moderation are natural instincts of self-preservation. But constant fear and prolonged worry are unfailing enemies to the human organism. They derange the normal bodily functions.

If you have learned how to please others, you always will be in a good mood. This is because your mind does not allow worries to be accommodated in it.

The Voice of Nature

For the sake of material gain modern man does not listen to the voice of nature. His mental activities are so preoccupied with his future happiness that he neglects the needs of his physical body and entirely forgets the present moment for what it is worth. This unnatural behaviour of contemporary man is the immediate result of his wrong conceptions of World Order, of human life and its ultimate purpose. It is the cause of all the frustration, anxiety, fear and insecurity of our present times. One who really likes to have peace should not disturb another man’s freedom. It is wrong to seek happiness by disturbing and deceiving others.

If man is cruel and wicked, always lives against the laws of nature and the cosmos; through his acts, words and thoughts, he pollutes the whole atmosphere. As a result of such misdeeds and thoughts, nature may not produce things which man requires for his living but instead man may be faced with epidemics and various kinds of disasters.

If, on the other hand, man lives in accordance with this natural law, leads a righteous way of life, purifies the atmosphere through the merits of his virtues and radiates his loving kindness towards other living beings, he can change the atmosphere in order to bring about better results for the happiness of man.

You may be a very modern busy man, but do not forget to spend at least a few minutes a day in reading some valuable books. This habit will give you a lot of relief and enable you to forget your worries and to develop your mind. At the same time you have to remember that you have a religion also. Religion is for your own benefit. Therefore it is your duty to think about your religion and to spare a few minutes a day to fulfil your religious duties.

Mental Health and Criminal Tendencies

In relation to health, it is not Aids, or cancer, that is the most alarming of the ailments of our age. These sicknesses are now under control, and there is every hope that a cure for them will be found in the near future. Actually, the most alarming of all is the prevalence and

increase in all kinds of mental ailments and disturbances. We are forced to build more and more hospitals and institutions for the mentally sick and neurotics of various kinds. There are many more who do not receive any treatment, but who are in great need of it.

It may be asked why the criminal element within our society is mentioned in the same breath as the mentally afflicted. One of the positive and far-reaching results stemming directly from the research work of Freud is the recognition that criminals and delinquents are also mentally sick people, more in need of treatment than punishment. It is this liberal outlook on the problem that is the basis of all “progressive” social reform, and which open the way for reclamation rather than revenge.

Know Thy Neighbour

We can never know how other people live; we may not even know anything about the lives of people of different social levels from ourselves or of lesser or greater wealth. If we are healthy we cannot know what it is like to be sick and if we are invalids we cannot understand the energy of the strong.

Such lack of experience makes for intolerance, because tolerance is born only of understanding and without experience there can be no understanding. Hence it is a good thing for us to get as wide an experience as is possible of all aspects of life, and especially to travel and let us make sure we do not always travel in luxury!

Man's Unhappiness

The Buddha taught that all man's unhappiness comes from wanting extraordinary things, the pleasures that money can buy, power over other men, and, most important of all, to go on living forever after one is dead. The desire for these things makes people selfish, so that they come to think only of themselves, want things only for themselves, and are not worried what happens to others. The only way to avoid this restlessness is to get rid of the desires that cause it. This is very difficult; but when a man achieves it, he reaches a state of perfection and calm.

We did not enjoy pleasures but were ourselves overcome by pleasures (i.e. by endless anxiety in seeking those pleasures all our energies were sapped). We suffer more than we enjoy in seeking the pleasures of this phenomenal world.

Time will Heal Our Wounds

Trouble passes. What has caused you to burst into tears today will soon be forgotten; you may remember that you cried but it is unlikely that you will remember what you cried about! As we grow up and go through life, if we remember this we shall often be surprised to find how we lie awake at night brooding over something that has happened to upset us during the day, or how we nurse resentment against someone and keep on letting the same thoughts run through our minds about how we are going to have our own back against the person who has harmed

us. We may fall into a rage over something and later wonder what it was we were so angry about. And even if we do remember, we realize what a waste of time and energy it has all been, and how we have deliberately gone on being unhappy when we could have stopped it and started to think about something else.

Whatever our troubles, however grievous they may appear, time will heal our wounds. But surely there must be something we can do to prevent ourselves from being hurt in the first place. Why should we allow people and troubles to drain our energy and make us unhappy? The answer is, of course, that they do not, it is we who make ourselves unhappy.

You may have had some trouble in your office or the place where you work but you should not bring or extend such troubles to your home and create a bad atmosphere among your loved ones who are innocent.

You should realize that there is a cure or an end to those problems and troubles. This is to be found by achieving freedom from our selfish desires and by eradicating all forms of confusion and ignorance.

Wherever we fail to find a solution to any problem, we are inclined to find a scapegoat, someone against whom we can vent our frustrations. We are not prepared to admit our own shortcomings. We feel it is easier to put the blame on others and to nurture a grievance against someone. In fact, some of us take pleasure in so doing. This is a completely wrong attitude. We must not show resentment or be angry towards others. We should do

our utmost, painstakingly and calmly, to resolve our own problems. We must be prepared to face up to any difficulties that we may encounter.

Happiness and Materialism

Many people believe they can solve all their problems if only they have money; but they fail to realize that money itself has its attendant problems. Money alone cannot solve all problems.

Many people never learn this and all their lives they rush about using all their energy trying to collect many more “gadgets”, and when they have them they find that these do not satisfy them, but they must have other “things and more gadgets”. In fact, the more they have the more they desire to have; so they can never be happy or contented. This materialism is the greatest problem faced by society today.

The following advice gives us tremendous consolation when we lose something:-

“Say not that this is yours and that is mine,
Just say, this came to you and that to me,
So we may not regret the fading shine,
Of all the glorious things which ceased to be.”

Wealth is not something for you to dump somewhere and to crave for. It is for you to make use of for your welfare as well as others. If you spend your time by only clinging to your property without even fulfilling

your obligations towards your country, your people and your religion you may find that when the time comes for you to leave this world, you will still be plagued with worries. You will not have benefitted from that wealth which you have so painstakingly collected.

To hope for wealth and gain through gambling is like hoping for shelter from the sun through the clouds, whereas to hope for progress and prosperity through diligence in work is like building a permanent house as a shelter from the sun and rain.

“Your property will remain when you die. Your friends and relatives will follow you up to your grave. But only good or bad actions you have done during your life-time will follow you beyond the grave.”

Many things that we hope will give us pleasure subsequently turn out otherwise. Apparently, it sounds nice to have a lot of money but if we get it, we may find that it brings us worry in deciding how to use it or how to protect it, or we may be led to act foolishly. The rich man begins to wonder if his friends value him for himself or for his money, and this is another form of mental sorrow. And there is always the fear of losing what we have, whether they be possessions or some beloved person. So when we are honest and look closely at what we call “happiness” we find that it is a kind of mirage in the mind, never fully grasped, never complete, or at the best, accompanied by fear of loss.

Your wealth can decorate only your house but not you. Only your own virtue can decorate you. Your dress

can decorate your body but not you. Only your good conduct can decorate you.

The method that people should adopt to gain happiness must be a harmless one. There is no meaning in enjoying happiness by causing suffering to another person or any other living being. Buddha says: *“Blessed are they who earn their living without harming others.”*

“Happiness is a perfume you cannot pour on others without getting a few drops on yourself.”

You may not be able to change the world according to your wishes but you may be able to change your mind to find happiness.

It is only when you have suffered through doing good that you can achieve a greater happiness than others.

“If we want to find happiness, let us stop thinking about gratitude or ingratitude and give for the inner joy of giving. Ingratitude is natural-like weeds. Gratitude is like a rose. It has to be fed, watered and cultivated and loved and protected.” (D. Carnegie).

Control Your Mind

Man's mind influences his body profoundly. If allowed to function viciously and entertain unwholesome thoughts, mind can cause disaster, it can even kill a being; but it can also cure a sick body. When the mind is concentrated on right thoughts with right effort and understanding the effect it can produce is immense. A mind with pure and wholesome thoughts really does lead to healthy

relaxed living.

The Buddha says: "No enemy can harm one so much as one's own thoughts of craving, thoughts of hate, thoughts of jealousy and so on."

A man who does not know how to adjust his mind according to circumstances would be like a corpse in a coffin.

Turn your mind to yourself, and try to find pleasure within yourself, and you will always find therein an infinite source of pleasure ready for your enjoyment.

It is only when the mind is controlled and is kept to the right road of orderly progress that it becomes useful for its possessor and for society. A disorderly mind is a liability both to its owner and to others. All the havoc wrought in the world is created by men who have not learned the way of mind control, balance and poise.

Calmness is not weakness. A calm attitude at all times shows a man of culture. It is not too difficult for man to be calm when things are favourable, but to be composed when things are going wrong is difficult indeed, and it is this difficult quality that is worth achieving; for by such calm and control he builds up strength of character. It is quite wrong to imagine that they alone are strong and powerful who are noisy, garrulous and fussily busy.

Act Wisely

Man must know how to use his youth, wealth, power, energy and knowledge at the proper time, at the proper

place and in the proper way for his own benefit and welfare of others as well. If he misuses such privileges it will only cause his own down-fall. *“Man must be strong enough to know when he is weak, brave enough to encounter fear, proud and unbending in honest defeat, humble and gentle in victory.”*

Some people through a sudden stroke of fortune receive a large sum of money or are endowed with some property, or they might inherit a large share of the property from their parents. But amongst them only a very few would know how to preserve and maintain such newly acquired property. Normally property that is easily acquired without one's own effort and labour, has no real value. Therefore they will start to spend the money on unnecessary things and, very soon, the whole property will be squandered. People must know how to handle their property without wasting it, and for that they must use a little bit of their common sense.

Adjust Ourselves

We are living in an ever changing world. But very few people realize this fact. One should not cling to the traditions, customs, manners, habits and beliefs introduced by ancient people and ancestors thinking that he should follow all those traditions forever and ever. If he is going to be so narrow minded then there will be no progress in this society of ours. There may be some good customs amongst them but one must consider whether all customs handed down from ancient times are

congenial to modern society.

On the other hand parents and elderly people are in conflict with the younger generation. They would like to see their children follow the same old customs and traditions. However, this is not a very good attitude to adopt. Allow the children to move with the times if it is harmless. Parents only have to remember how their own parents had objected to certain modern ways of living prevalent at the time when they were young. This conflict between the conservative people and the younger generation is not a very healthy attitude for the progress of society. Of course, if children go astray due to misguidance of modern society then parents should counsel and guide them.

You must learn how to tolerate the other man's views and customs even though you do not like them. Tolerance does not mean that you have to follow his method, but try to understand why he practises it.

Every man is a part of the world of man, and is responsible for what goes on in it. He must be concerned as to whether or not society is becoming more humanized. He must ask what he himself is doing to bring about a better order of things. This is the ethical view by which life takes on a serious aspect and is given an incentive. Such a life is the really happy life. Then we can become constructively discontented with the present order of things, and proceed happily to do something about it.

Healthy Atmosphere

However bitter may be the jokes and remarks directed at you by others, like a wise man you too must answer them with another joke without creating an unhealthy atmosphere.

When you play a game do not show your temper if you are losing the game; by doing so you not only spoil the pleasure of others but you will in the end completely lose the game. You cannot correct each and every person in this world in order to achieve peace in the same way as you cannot remove the world of stones and thorns to walk smoothly. One who wants to walk on smooth ground must wear a pair of shoes. Likewise, one who wants to have peace of mind, must know how to guard his own senses.

There are various ways to correct a person if he is wrong. By criticising, blaming and shouting at him publicly, you cannot correct him; you must know how to correct him without humiliating him. Many people make more enemies by criticising others. If you can advise a person kindly, with the intention of correcting him, he will certainly listen to you and some day he will thank you for your guidance and kindness.

Whenever you express your views regarding certain matters, always try to use words which would not hurt the feelings of others. There are various ways of expressing your views either gently or politely or even diplomatically.

You should not lose your temper when your faults

are pointed out. You may think that by showing temper and shouting at others you can suppress or overcome your shortcomings. It is a false and wrong attitude to adopt.

You should not reveal the personal secrets of a former friend which were confided to you even though you are not in good terms with him. If you do so, others will look down upon you and will never accept you as a sincere man.

Be Unbiased

You should not come to any hasty decision regarding any matter when you are in a bad mood or when provoked by someone, not even when you are in good mood influenced by emotion, because at such a time the state of your mind is emotional and any decision or conclusion reached during such a period would be a matter you could one day regret. Allow your mind to calm down first and think over it, then your judgement will be an unbiased one.

Cultivate tolerance; for tolerance helps you to avoid hasty judgements, to sympathise with other people's troubles, to avoid captious criticism, to realize that even the finest human being is not infallible; the weakness you find in your neighbours can be found in your own self.

Humility

Humility is the wise man's measuring-rod for learning the difference between what is and what is yet to be. "The

Buddha himself started his ministry by discarding all his princely pride in an act of humility. He attained sainthood during his life, but never lost his naturalness, never assumed superior airs. His dissertations and parables were never pompous. He had time for the most humble of men. He never lost his sense of humour.”

Don't Waste Your Time

To waste a man's existence in grieving over the past, in idleness and heedlessness is to show his unfitness for the noble place he holds thus, inviting his bad kamma to relegate him to a place befitting his unworthiness. Bear this strongly in your mind, and do good while life lasts. By wasting your time you injure not only yourself but also others, for time is as much others' as it is yours.

Patience and Tolerance

Be patient with all. Anger leads one through a pathless jungle. While it irritates and annoys others, it also hurts oneself, weakens the physical frame and disturbs the mind. A harsh word, like an arrow discharged from a bow, can never be taken back even if you would offer a thousand apologies for it.

Certain creatures cannot see in the day-time whilst some others are blind at night. But a man driven to great heights of hatred does not observe anything, either by day or night.

With whom and with what do you fight when you are angry? You fight with yourself, for you are your worst

enemy. Mind is your best friend and worst foe. You must try to kill the passions of lust, hatred and ignorance that are latent in your mind by means of morality, concentration and wisdom.

Some varieties of heart trouble, rheumatic disorders, and skin diseases are traceable to chronic resentment, hatred and jealousy. Such destructive feelings poison the heart. They foster the development of latent disease tendencies and invite disease.

Returning Good for Evil

If you want to get rid of your enemies you should first kill your anger which is the greatest enemy within you.

On the other hand if you are going to be perturbed hearing from your enemies, it means you are fulfilling the wishes of your enemies by unknowingly entering into their trap.

You should not think that you can only learn something from those who praise and help you and associate with you very closely. There are many things you could learn from your enemies also; you should not think they are entirely wrong just because they happen to be your enemies. They may also possess certain good qualities.

You will not be able to get rid of your enemies by returning evil for evil. If you do that then you will only be inviting more enemies. The best and the most correct method of overcoming your enemies is by radiating your kindness towards them. You may think that this is

impossible or something nonsensical. But this method is very highly appreciated by every cultured man. When you come to know that there is someone who is very angry with you, you should first try to find out the main cause of that enmity; if it is due to your mistake you should admit it and should not hesitate to apologize to him. If it is due to certain misunderstandings between both of you, you must have a heart to heart talk with him and try to enlighten him. If it is due to jealousy or some other emotional feeling you must try to radiate your loving kindness towards him so that you will be able to influence him through your mental energy. You may not be able to understand how it works but the experience of many people shows that this is the most powerful, intelligent and easiest method which is very highly recommended in the Buddhist religion. Of course, to do this, you must have confidence and patience in yourself. By doing this you will be able to make your enemy understand that he is in the wrong; besides, you are also benefitted in various ways for not accommodating enmity in your heart.

If it is not possible to return good for evil, then try not to return evil for evil.

Loving Kindness

As long as there is one single fellow creature whom you can console by kind words, whom you can enliven and cheer by your presence, whom you can relieve by your worldly possessions, however scanty that charity may be,

you are a precious possession to the human race and you should never be disheartened or depressed.

There may be times when those whom you love do not seem to care for you and you are apt to feel heavy at heart. But there is no just cause for dejection. What does it matter if others are not grateful to you or do not care for you, as long as you know that you are full of tender-heartedness for others, full of loving compassion to your fellow men? One should never depend on others for one's happiness. *He who expects to secure satisfaction in life from others is worse than the beggar who kneels and cries for his daily bread.*

Refrain from Intoxicants

The Buddha has asked us to refrain from intoxicants — as one of our precepts. There are a multitude of reasons as to why we should follow the precept. A well-known poet has given his reasons as to why we should refrain from intoxicants. The reasons are as follows:—

Drunkenness

Drunkenness expels reason,
Drowns memory,
Defaces the brain,
Diminishes strength,
Inflames the blood,
Causes incurable external and internal wounds.
Is a witch to the body,
A devil to the mind,

A thief to the purse,
The beggar's curse,
The wife's woe,
The children's sorrow,
The picture of a beast,
And self murder,
Who drinks to other's health,
And robs himself of his own.

Its final result can never be anything but utter physical and moral degradation.

The Drug Menace

Alcohol has been described as one of the prime causes of man's physical and moral degradation. Currently another more vicious form of abuse, that of harmful and dangerous drugs, as contained in heroin, hashish and various other forms, has shown its ugly head, causing much more serious human and social problems to the well-being of humanity. This problem is now world-wide. Its repercussions are more serious and deadly than that of alcohol. Thefts, robberies, sexual crimes and swindling of vast magnitude have taken place due to the pernicious influence of the drugs. Murders have been committed and families have been decimated by drug addicts. Drug addicts become victims of Aids disease.

Countless millions of hard-earned dollars have been spent by Governments throughout the world to rid the addicts of their evil habits and to rehabilitate them but the maddening craze persists. It is our bounded duty, as

dutiful citizens, to help in whatever manner we can, through religious and social organizations to eradicate this dreadful and obnoxious habit and to prevent our children from ever getting near to it. Life as a drug addict is a life of torture and hell on earth, leading to an early grave.

As human beings we should be able to exercise our self-control and to distinguish between what is good and evil. Keep away from the drug menace and help others to do so. That will be the greatest service to humanity.

You Create Heaven and Hell Here

If you want to live in this world peacefully and happily, allow others also to live peacefully and happily, so that you can make this life something which is worthy of the world you live. Unless and until you adjust yourself to live according to these noble principles you cannot expect happiness and peace in this world. You cannot expect this happiness and peace from heaven simply by praying. If you act according to moral principles you can create your own heaven right here in this world. If not, you also can see the hell-fire on this earth itself. Not knowing how to live according to this natural and cosmic law, we always grumble when troubles confront us. If each man tries to adjust himself without grumbling and criticizing others we can enjoy real heavenly bliss better than the one that some people dream of existing in the far beyond. There is no need to create a heaven elsewhere to reward virtue, or a hell to punish vice; virtue

and evil have inevitable reactions in this world itself. This is the highest way that you can help in the welfare of your society and your country. Today, human society has developed up to this level because of this understanding and harmony of some people who have sympathy and tolerance towards the happiness and progress of others. On the other hand, you must understand that by helping others morally, you help yourself and by helping yourself morally you help others also.

Happy Married Life

In a true marriage, man and woman think more of the partnership than they do of themselves. It is an interweaving of interests and a facing of sacrifice together for the sake of both. A feeling of security and contentment comes from mutual efforts.

Most of the trouble and worries occurring amongst husband and wife, parents and children, their relatives and friends are due to misunderstanding and impatience. The husband should not treat the wife as a servant. Although he is the bread-winner of the family, it is his duty whenever he is free to help the wife in the household chores. On the other hand the wife should not always nag or grumble at her husband whenever there is any shortage at home. She should not also be suspicious of her husband. If he really has some weaknesses she could correct him by talking it over with him kindly. A wife has to tolerate a lot of things without bothering her husband. A husband also has to act wisely

without behaving in such a way for his wife not to create suspicion and jealousy.

Marriage is a blessing but many people turn their married life into a curse due to lack of understanding, tolerance and patience. Poverty is not the main cause of an unhappy married life. Husband and wife must learn to share the pleasure and pain of everything in their daily life. Mutual understanding is the secret of a happy family life.

Accept Criticism

Sweetness is sickness, bitterness is medicine. Praise is like a sweet, excess of which causes sickness. And criticism is like a bitter pill or a painful injection which cures sickness. We must have the courage to welcome criticism and not to be afraid of it.

“The ugliness we see in others
Is a reflection of our own nature”

A man’s individual life, circumstances and world are a reflection of his own thoughts and beliefs. All men are mirrors reflecting according to their own surface.

Mind Your Own Business

How nice it would be, if you could attend to your own affairs without too much interference from others. Here is the advice given by the Buddha:

“One should not regard the faults of others, things done and left undone by others, but one’s own deeds of commission and omission.”

Again the Buddha says: *“He who is observant of others’ faults, and is always irritable, his own defilement increase. He is far from the destruction of defilement.”*

Further He says: *“Easy to see the faults of others; but one’s own is difficult to see. One winnows other’s faults like chaff; but one’s own one hides as a crafty fowler covers himself.”*

“The noble swerve not from the right path, let happen what may, and crave no longer after worldly joys. The wise remain calm and constant in mind alike in joy and in sorrow”.

No one can live in this world without being blamed and criticised by others. The Buddha says: *“People blame others for their silence. They blame those who talk much and those in moderation. There is therefore no one in this world who is not blamed.”* Further He says: *“There never was, nor will be, nor is there now any one who is wholly blamed or wholly praised.”*

Not all those who criticize you are your enemies. You can make use of the opportunity to find out your own weaknesses which you yourself cannot see.

You should not give up good work just because of criticism. If you have the courage to carry out your good work in spite of criticisms, you are indeed a great man and can succeed anywhere.

Don’t Worry

The secret of happy, successful living lies in doing what needs to be done now, and not worrying about the past

and the future. We cannot go back into the past and reshape it nor can we anticipate everything that may happen in the future. There is but one moment of time over which we have some conscious control and that is the present.

Many people just worry by thinking about their future. If they have learned to adjust themselves according to the circumstances of their daily life there is no reason for them to be worried. Whatever castles they may build in the air, whatever dreams they may have in their mind, they must always remember that they are living in this world of constant changes.

Pillars of Success

Failures are but the pillars of success. To learn by our failures is to achieve success. To never have failed is never to have won. Unless we experience failure and its attendant forces, we shall not be able to appreciate victory to the full. It becomes merely a turn in events that is of little or no interest to us. Failures not only help us to succeed, but make us kind, sympathetic, understanding and rich in experience.

The Real Beauty

If one is born ugly, no matter how ugly his face may be, if he cultivates love, that love will give him an inward eternal charm which emanates outwardly and pervades his whole being with that supernatural charm which will make him attractive because charm is the real beauty

and not the shape, size or colour of the face.

Let us take the most beautiful looking person. Sometimes people may not be attracted towards her because her beauty may be disfigured by the conceit or pride in her own beauty. Take the person who is ugly but is overflowing with boundless loving-kindness and speaks gently and politely, treats others kindly and you will see how attractive that person will be to everybody.

Love of life on earth stimulates the unnatural, morbid fear of death. It creates the hypochondriac, the man who will never take risks even for the right. He lives in terror that some illness or accident will snuff out his insignificant little life here. Realization that death is inevitable, an irrational terror of the inevitable will shock the earth-lover into a passionate hope for existence in heavenly abodes. No man can be happy in such a tempest of fear and hope. It is hard to despise and ignore these manifestations of the instinct for self-preservation. There is, however, a sure method of overcoming it. This is to forget the self in service of other people; it is to turn one's love from inwards to outwards. Become engrossed in helping others and you will forget your own morbid, selfish attachments and hopes, pride and self-righteousness.

Everybody likes to have a peaceful death after fulfilling his lifetime of duties and obligations. But how many people have prepared the ground for such an event? How many people take the trouble to fulfil their duties towards their family, relatives, friends, country, religion and nation? If a man dies without fulfilling

any of these duties surely it is very difficult ultimately for such a person to have a peaceful death.

Many people are afraid of dead bodies. But living bodies are more dangerous than dead bodies. More people were defeated and frightened by living bodies than lifeless dead bodies.

If you depart from this world without fulfilling your duties, your birth to this world is neither beneficial to yourself nor to this world. Therefore perform your duties and face death bravely and peacefully. And one day you will be able to attain the deathless condition where you can have eternal happiness. ■